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FOR THOSE THAT CHOOSE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES

From The Desk Of: MARINA ZACHARIAS

Puppy Prozac? Stupid Drug Of The Month Award

Will it never end? Drug maker Novartis has come out with a pill to treat "separation anxiety" in dogs. With full FDA approval the drug *clomipramine hydrochloride* will soon be available at your local friendly veterinarian's office under the brand name "Clomicalm".

Now I'm not saying that separation anxiety is not a real problem for some dogs, but I thought a drug had to be proven for efficacy and safety before receiving FDA approval.

According to the literature put out by Novartis, the drug will decrease symptoms in 47% of dogs providing that it is combined with "behavior modifications". They do admit that these "behavior modifications" by themselves decreases the symptoms by 29% without the drug.

So lets see now. If my arithmetic is right, 47 minus 29 is 18%. So by their own literature are they saying that the drug works on 18% of dogs suffering from separation anxiety if it is combined with behavior modifications? This is all that's needed for FDA approval?

There are a few other little things they don't really want to emphasize. Clomicalm has been linked to side effects in male breeding dogs, pregnant females, in dogs prone to seizures, in aggressive dogs and in younger animals. It can't be used for puppies younger than six months and has only been approved for use no longer than 90 days. This stuff is safe?

Yep! Sounds like a great candidate for our 'stupid drug of the month' award. Or instead of spending \$1.00 a day for this great wonder drug (you wonder if it will work), you may choose to use a Bach Flower remedy, a homeopathic remedy such as fear/stress, or an herb such as St. Johns wort, or melatonin, etc. depending on the severity of the problem. It will be a lot less expensive, with no side effects and all will be effective—regardless of "behavior modifications". (1)

Flax Seed Oil

In previous issues we published some basic information on unsaturated fatty acids. Before discussing the benefits of flax seed oil I again want to caution you that we are only referring to a truly cold pressed product.

CAUTION: Many products are labeled as "cold pressed" using the same processes as ordinary grocery store oil that has been heat processed. As near as I can determine the expression "cold pressed" has no legal meaning, so can be used in any way the manufacturer wishes despite the temperatures etc. used in the process.

The only brands that I trust at this time are "Flora" and "Omega Nutrition" that actually produce an unrefined, "whole" oil utilizing elaborate (expensive) methods without heat. Truly "cold pressed".

Almost all of the oils sold in health food stores are also refined and are almost identical to supermarket oils. Care must be taken to obtain only raw, **unrefined** oils.

The benefits of flax seed have a long history. Almost two thousand years ago, "Pliney the Elder" (a Roman scholar and naturalist) cited thirty remedies using flax. Many of them match today's scientific knowledge.

In the later half of this century, numerous studies using flax seed oil, show impressive results including anti-tumor activity, increased metabolism, greatly boosted immune systems, reduced cholesterol levels, normalized blood pressure levels and inhibition of cancer cell growth.

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Much of this research was triggered by the work of the now famous Dr. Johanna Budwig of Germany. She is best known for her extensive research on the properties and benefits of flaxseed oil combined with sulphurated proteins in the diet.

Dr. Budwig has assisted many seriously ill individuals (even those given up as terminal by orthodox medical practitioners) to regain their health through a simple regimen of nutrition. The basis of her program is the use of flaxseed oil blended with low-fat cottage cheese.

She found that neither the essential fatty acids nor the sulphurated proteins from cottage cheese did the job alone. Only when consumed in combination with one another at the right ratios does the patient register benefits. (Her research was based on using the ratio of 2 tablespoons flaxseed oil mixed with one-quarter cup of low fat cottage cheese). This is due to the fact that the essentials need to bind to protein before the body can assimilate them.

Based on the information she knew about raw flaxseed oil and protein working together, Dr. Budwig fed cancer patients flaxseed oil and low-fat cottage cheese and monitored the changes that occurred in these patients. She found that the yellowish-green substance in their blood was replaced with healthy red pigment hemoglobin. The phosphatides returned and the lipoproteins reappeared.

She also found that tumors receded and disappeared, anemia was alleviated, vital energy increased and vitality returned, and the patient recuperated. It took about three months for these changes. During this time, symptoms of cancer, diabetes, and liver disease disappeared.

Over the years she has published a number of books on the subject, including "Cancer—A Fat Problem", "The Death of the Tumor", and "True Health Against Arteriosclerosis, Heart Infarction & Cancer".

Her fight to get the results of her research disseminated would make a great television series. The German manufacturers of commercial dietary fats (margarine, vegetable oils, etc.) went to extremes to prevent her from publishing her findings. They tried to smother the fact that these "pseudo" fats are harmful to the body.

The chemical processing of fats destroys the vital electron cloud within the fat. Once the electrons have been removed, these fats can no longer bind with oxygen. These fats are not water soluble when bound to protein. They end up blocking circulation, damage heart action, inhibit cell renewal and impede the free flow of blood and lymph fluids. The bio-electrical action in these areas slows down and may become completely paralyzed. It's little wonder that the commercial producers tried to quash her research.

As true cold pressed flax seed oil is one of the best sources for essential fatty acids. It is one part of the raw food diet for my dogs that I will always continue to use, without exception. For those of you still feeding processed dog food, please consider adding this vital ingredient.

(2)

Taking The Hype Out Of Herbs

Have you noticed how "conventional" mainstream health care professionals are now starting to tout the benefits of herbal medicine? Medical journals are publishing more research on herbs. Slowly but surely "high tech" medicine is embracing botanicals. Public demand has grown to the point that the large pharmaceutical companies have jumped on the bandwagon fighting to get their share of an estimated \$4 billion market (and rapidly growing).

Have you noticed that after the "spin doctors" get through with their story of the latest herbal product, you are left with the impression that **everything** is good for **everything**!

Have you noticed how many multilevel marketing outfits are after people to get rich while they get healthy with this or that herbal line?

The use of plants for their health promoting and healing properties goes back to the beginning of human history. It is still a major part of the health care system for 80% of the world's population. So the U.S. is just catching up to the rest of the world as far as the interest in herbs. But you have to leave it to the "big boys" over here to find a way to produce products faster, cheaper, and provide us with "better health through chemistry".

Part of the hype being thrown at us is meant to convince us that "standardization" is a preferred process to "ensure that all herbal products contain the same amount of a plant's biologically active compounds." These are specific compounds believed to have therapeutic effects. Sounds desirable doesn't it? Problem is that the compound thought to be the "active ingredient" is not always what makes the herb work.

For example, almost all brands of standardized St. John's Wort contain 0.3 percent hypericin, the compound long believed to be the depressant factor. Researchers recently found that hypericin does not have antidepressant properties. The truth is that scientists are still unsure which compounds make St. John's Wort an aid to depression.

Standardization will concentrate and increase the potency of single chemical compounds in herbs, and at the same time "remove undesirable (?) compounds". Once the natural complex has been altered, an herb (or food) is no longer intact as nature created it and cannot have the same effects or benefits.

There are three basic methods to standardize herbal products to make potencies of certain components relatively consistent. One is to extract the "principal" compounds by dissolving them in alcohol or another solvent such as hexane (a toxic petrochemical). A second method is to blend various batches of herbal extracts (including the foregoing). The third way is to "spike" the product with a manufactured or synthetic amount of the "active compound". Spiking with one or two compounds creates a chemical imbalance and diminishes the natural synergy of plant components.

In the U.S. there is no legal definition of and no industry agreement on the meaning of “standardization”. Different companies have different approaches. In one experiment, three brands of standardized ginkgo biloba affected brain waves in three different ways. One company standardizes nettle root to amino acids, another company standardizes to sterols, and yet another to the chemical scopoletin.

The pharmaceutical industry is having a field day pumping out hype on their “herbal” products. In the main, they use studies conducted with “whole” herbs to prove a point and then go on to say that their product is better because it is “standardized”. Drug companies can easily isolate and/or synthesize chemicals to “boost” or standardize herbs to have a pharmacological action. This is a lot less expensive than producing a drug that needs to go through the FDA approval process. The more chemical fractions, concentrated, high-potency, manufactured ingredients used in supplements the better they like it. It’s adding millions to their bottom line profits. People may want to take “natural” products, but too often they expect immediate “drug” effects. The pharmaceutical boys are only too happy to give them what they want—a drug disguised as an herb!

The role of herbs is ostensibly to enhance the diet with special components from safe, natural plants to support and protect bodily functions and processes. Herbs contain combinations of numerous natural plant chemicals both known and unknown. Non-standardized, unaltered herbs won’t supply “scientific certainty” for levels of a particular chemical. They will supply a broader range of the plant compounds. Most who study and use herbs attribute the health benefits to the synergism of the whole range of natural constituents. Nature has still not revealed all her secrets to science.

The animal kingdoms’ relationship with the plant kingdom is an evolutionary beneficial partnership. Thousands of years of adaptation have provided us with the ability to utilize the bounties of nature for healing and prevention of disease. The underlying design of this phenomenon is not based on a “profit” motive. When “man” starts to mess around with this design to produce “new and improved” versions of natural products, he is essentially saying that evolution can be tossed out the window because we now have the capability of manufacturing a cheap substitute that “does the same thing”.

After World War II, the public became enamored with the concept of a quick fix with pharmaceuticals. It was believed that scientists could cure anything with drugs. We all know how this turned out. As we move towards the next century are we seeing the first steps in fostering the belief that herbs can cure anything? Especially if they are “enhanced” by the same science that provided us with all the wonder drugs?

Herbs can and often do play a role in balancing, cleansing, and enervating the body’s systems. But they are not the only answer to good health. They should not be viewed or used as magic bullets for instantaneous cure. Beware of hype that tries to convince you that this is their purpose.

REBEL FORCES STRIKE BACK

You probably won’t hear much about this in the news media but the rebel forces have a new hero. His name is Durk Pearson and he lives in a little desert mining town half way between Reno and Vegas. He has just given you a major court decision to obtain truthful information concerning health products.

To really appreciate the extent of this gift you need to know a little background. At one time or another most of you have probably walked into a health food store. As you looked around, you saw row after row of products. What you didn’t see was very much information, including scientific references, to the bewildering array of products. What should you take? How do you know? Even the clerks in the store are very cautious about making any “health claims” about any of the products. Why?

It turns out that the FDA prohibits a company from informing people of the health benefits of a product, no matter how truthful, unless the FDA approves the claim. It has approved only two claims in the past **10 years** (that folic acid can prevent neural-tube birth defects and that calcium helps prevent osteoporosis). Even if other Government publications have plainly stated that such and such is good for so and so, it’s not the truth unless the FDA says it is! If some poor clerk in the health food store were to tell you that “Vitamin C will help you to fight a cold” he was inviting the wrath of the FDA and could be visited by the “storm troopers” of the Empire.

Now let me tell you a little about our hero. Durk is a universal genius with patents and discoveries in a wide variety of technologies and scientific fields. At one time MIT tried to measure his IQ but gave up, saying it was probably around 250 but for all they knew it could be over 300.

One of his passions (and that of his life and lab partner Sandy Shaw) is learning how human beings can live a very long time (this of course includes himself and his loved ones). This led him to create a number of nutritional formulas, originally for personal consumption and later sold through licensees, designed to extend the human life span, and enable our brains and bodies to function optimally.

Another of his motivation passions is a commitment to liberty, to political and economic freedom in America. By now you’re probably ahead of me in this story of Durk versus Goliath. In studying government regulations controlling the dietary supplement industry (and thus his licenses) he saw how the FDA had more power than any other government agency to do pretty much anything they saw fit to do in regulating the largest commercial segment of the retail economy.

And so it was that Durk and Sandy (with their own money) sought out the best constitutional lawyer they could find and launched a suit against the FDA. They contended that the FDA’s refusal to allow such truthful health claims as “antioxidant vitamins may reduce the risk of certain cancers” for their formulas was a violation of the First Amendment’s protection of free speech.

The suit, *Pearson v. Shalala*, was filed in 1994 and argued by lawyer Jonathan Emord all the way up to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington.

On January 15, 1999 the Court handed down a unanimous decision, ruling that FDA regulations of truthful speech were indeed unconstitutional. The FDA still maintains full authority to prosecute fraud—but now it must specify clear standards for what constitutes fraud and claims lacking scientific credibility. Before, fraud or a misleading claim was whatever the FDA said it was, and they could capriciously shut any company down.

The decision (very unlikely to be appealed to the Supreme Court) is a landmark that will have an extraordinary impact on the health of millions of Americans. For those of you on the Internet, it can be downloaded from: www.emord.com

I am cautiously optimistic that this decision will increase the availability of truthful health information and will provide a much wider distribution of the explosion of scientific knowledge. Hopefully, the broader application of dietary supplementation will cause a dramatic reduction in health care and medical service costs, as people will know how to better take care of themselves and their animals.

Durk and Sandy took on one of the most arrogant and powerful bureaucracies in Washington and won a battle for freedom for all of us. The war isn't over by a long shot but a federal agency has less, much less, capacity to harm our lives than it did a couple of months ago.

May the force be with them!



ECHINACEA

Echinacea is probably the most widely used herbal medicine in the English speaking world. Unfortunately the scientific information that has been published from many, many studies has led to confusion with respect to suggested restrictions and contraindications.

It would be a shame not to use this powerful immune modulator due to a misconception or misinterpretation of data that tries to explain how echinacea works. In this article I will try to give you enough information to remove the “fear” aspect of using this herb. I will have to get into a little science mumbo jumbo so that you realize where and why some of these scientific conclusions are probably ill advised.

First a little background. Echinacea is the name of a group of nine plants native to North America and part of the sunflower/daisy family. The most common are *echinacea purpurea* (the most studied), *echinacea angustifolia*, and *echinacea pallida*.

Many Native American tribes used echinacea as a remedy for more ailments than any other plant. European settlers adopted the use of this herb. The Eclectics (a group of practitioners that were prominent around the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the U.S.) used echinacea for about fifty years and accumulated extensive clinical experiences in its use. By 1921 echinacea (specifically the root of *E. Angustifolia*) was by far the most popular treatment prescribed by Eclectic physicians. Their “traditional” use data is of a high quality and encompasses an extensive list of ailments, some of which “science” indicates would be contra-indicated today.

With the advent of sulfa drugs, penicillin, etc., the use of echinacea went into rapid decline. The revival of interest in herbal medicines during the 1970s and 1980s again drew attention to echinacea as a remedy for colds, flu, bronchitis and various other ailments.

As usual, “science” tried to rip apart the elements of the herbal structure in an effort to determine just what makes it tick. They poked and prodded for every chemical constituent they could find, tested *in vitro* (fancy term for test tubes etc.), tested *in vivo* (another fancy term for “in the body”), ran studies for injectable and oral usage, drew conclusions (some justified, some not) and rushed to publish their work. Other writers jumped on some of these studies and enthusiastically quoted their favorite study, that proved that echinacea worked/didn't work, depending on which side of the fence the writer was sitting on.

The most common misconception that I often come across, is that echinacea depletes the immune system when used continuously for periods longer than several days. Most often I will see reference made to “shouldn't be used for more than five days in a row”. Sometimes this is “ten days” but the meaning is the same.

How this belief came about would be comical if it wasn't so sad. In 1989 a German clinical study tested the effect of an echinacea *purpurea* tincture on the phagocytic activity of human granulocytes. This was a single-blind study with injectable echinacea versus a placebo and a double blind study with oral consumption of echinacea versus a placebo. The results were published along with carefully drawn graphic presentations showing a marked increase of activity for the first five days, dropping down gradually for the next five days.

The story goes that when the study was first published here, it was translated from German to English and the graphs failed to note that echinacea was only given for five days! What the study really showed was that echinacea provided a gradual decline of increased activity for several days even after consumption had been stopped. Anyone glancing at the graphs in the report without knowing that echinacea was only administered for five days would draw the erroneous conclusion that “echinacea shouldn't be used for more than five days in a row” because it “depletes the immune system”.

What the study really demonstrated is the fact that:

- ❖ Phagocytic activity remains higher than normal while echinacea is given.

- ❖ Oral doses of echinacea stimulate phagocytic activity more than injected doses.
- ❖ When echinacea is stopped, phagocytic activity remains well above normal for a few days, indicating that far from causing depletion, there is a residual stimulating effect when echinacea is stopped.
- ❖ Phagocytic activity only returns to normal, that is, there is no depleting effect where activity drops to less than normal

So let's set the record straight on this one. **Echinacea is safe for long term oral consumption!** Numerous studies and traditional use support this position. The Eclectics used it for up to nine months for dozens of ailments with excellent results. A modern study showed that when echinacea was taken for ten weeks, it had a considerably greater effect on the immune system than when it was taken for two weeks.

Despite all the studies on echinacea, the scientific understanding of how echinacea works in the immune system is incomplete. Unfortunately this has led to several suggestions that echinacea is contraindicated or should be restricted in usage for several conditions.

Now here you have to realize that many of these studies are based on "active components" rather than on the whole herb. Conclusions drawn from many of these are at best premature and in many cases are probably unwarranted. Much of the confusion about echinacea has arisen from the misinterpretation or overemphasis of the polysaccharide component. This is further complicated by differences of results comparing *in vitro* and *in vivo* studies.

Early studies on a crude polysaccharide mixture showed that it stimulated T-lymphocyte numbers and activity in the test tube (*in vitro*). Later studies, using purified polysaccharides found this activity to be extremely low. Modern research indicates that the activity reported in the early studies was probably from the impurities in the mixture used and that these protein impurities are unlikely to survive normal human digestion.

In today's herbal literature you will still commonly find the statement that echinacea enhances production of T-cells. This is despite the fact that this finding never has been demonstrated for echinacea itself in any kind of pharmacological test and never in any *in vivo* or clinical test following oral doses (which after all are the most useful tests for oral therapy with herbal extracts). The problem with this kind of misinformation is that it causes practitioners to state that echinacea is contraindicated in autoimmune disorders or where a heightened immune response may be counterproductive (such as AIDS, asthma, leukemia, etc.). In truth, this is a hypothetical limitation based on out of date test-tube research.

There are several other restrictions or contraindications that exist in published literature that simply do not stand up under closer examination of their underlying premise.

The bottom line is that echinacea is one of the most valuable herbs in the world today. Misconceptions about its use can only devalue its role in modern health care. (5)

Some writers (mostly from the debunkers of holistic medicine) have flat out stated that echinacea is a dangerous herb and allergic reactions to it can kill you. They point out that this is what happened in Germany where three people died from taking echinacea. This is outright cow-pucky!

Their source for this claim was from sensationalist television and print-media journalism in Germany in 1996 that attributed three deaths to echinacea over a six-year period. A critique of these claims has been written by Dr. R. Bauer from the Institute for Pharmaceutical Biology at Heinrich Heine University. Professor Bauer is considered to be an expert on echinacea. To make a long story short, he investigated all three cases and blew the sensationalism out of the water by showing that echinacea was not the problem. He pointed out that since over 10 million units of echinacea products are sold annually in Germany, if the risk of allergic reaction were real then more cases would have been reported.

In the U.S. between 1993 and 1996, the FDA received eight reports of adverse effects in people who took echinacea including hepatitis, abdominal distress and arsenic poisoning. In some cases it is known that the products used were adulterated with or contained other substance. The FDA has never verified that echinacea caused the problem (and you can imagine how they tried).

According to some of the best sources of scientific data (German "Commission E" monographs, British Herbal Pharmacopoeia, British Herbal Compendium, etc.) there are no safety concerns, no known side effects from taking echinacea by mouth or as an ointment, for persons of all ages from "infants to adults". The weight of evidence, including traditional, observational and scientific is that limitations on the use of echinacea are ill advised.

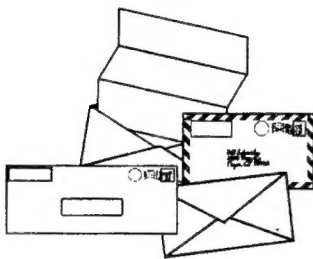
I must again point out that we are talking about the whole plant "complex" not some altered, enhanced or "standardized" version of echinacea.

For infections in general, the fact that echinacea increases phagocytic activity emphasizes that it works best as a preventative or in the early stages of an infection. This is consistent with the clinical experience of many herbalists. To be strictly accurate echinacea should not really be thought of as an immune stimulator. Its action is more of an immune modulator. If you remember from our discussion on the immune system, phagocytes play a major role as scouts for the immune system. Thus a substance such as echinacea, that enhances this surveillance may help the body to eliminate an invading organism or neutralize its imbalancing effect on the immune system, thereby toning down an inappropriate immune response.

Around our place it's one of the first things I reach for at the first signs of a cold, itchy throat or any "blah" feeling that any of us encounter. Truly this is a great herb that has received much unwarranted adverse attention. Don't hesitate to use it!



MAILBOX



Dateline January/99—VA

Hi Marina,

I promised I would send an official "thank you" once (dog's name) was off the Prednisone for a full year. Well, Saturday was officially a whole year free of Prednisone and Metrinidazole.

As you know, when we first contacted you in October 1997, (dog) was suffering from chronic bowel disease with all the usual symptoms. In addition to poor appetite he was unable to absorb necessary nutrients causing concern for his weight, suppressed immune system, and an all around sensitive system and behavior problems.

We had been to a specialist who said "put him to sleep—he'll never live to be 2 years of age". We went to others who were doing research in bowel diseases that recommended we stick with the usual conventional drugs. We tried both holistic and homeopathic vets that wouldn't listen to us when the remedies made this animal worse off than before with no signs of improvement.

We turned to you as our last shot before resigning ourselves to continuing treatment with conventional drugs that would probably over time shorten our beloved pet's existence and cause other problems along the way. I can truthfully say that you were quite honest and realistic with us. You told us the goal would be to make (dog's) disease manageable. It would probably never go away but we could hopefully reduce the symptoms and give our pet a quality of life he was lacking.

He is now 4 years old and fat and much healthier than he ever was before. He no longer is paralyzed from gut pain. Runny stools and vomiting are mostly a thing of the past. He loves to eat anything and everything he can get hold of, quite a change from before. His attitudes could use some more adjusting but let's remember that he is a Basenji.

This change didn't happen without a lot of time and energy both from you and also from us. It required some additional dietary changes, (we had already started feeding a natural diet) and a great deal of vitamins, herbs and glandular products. Although we've been able to reduce the number of his required supplements, he still requires quite a few both for his gut and general "sunny" disposition. We feel that it is well worth the cost and time involved.

Our vet has been amazed with the results, along with friends who have seen this dog at his worst and now at his best. We still keep the Prednisone and Metrinidazole on hand in case of a serious emergency but we will hopefully never need to use them again.

We just want to end this with a big THANK YOU for all your help and to let anyone else know not to give up. Perseverance does pay off.

This is another case where conventional medicine had very little to offer. Through persistence by the owner and utilization of a number of natural remedies in proper sequence, this animal has continued to bring years of companionship and returned love. This was a teamwork effort that produced happy results for everyone concerned.

Dateline February/99—NY

Dear Marina,

Just wanted to let you know that (name of dog) has now been completely free of any seizures for the last 14 months. I think we can finally say we've got this thing under control. What a relief!

When I think back, I can't begin to tell you how scary it was to see our poor 5-month old girl start to go into epileptic seizure. As you know this was happening on a daily basis and sometimes came in clusters. We were able to determine that this was a direct result of the vaccinations she received! Fortunately we chose not to use Phenobarbital.

With the regimen you suggested we saw an initial reduction in both the frequency and intensity of the seizures. There was a gradual reduction over the next three months and then they ceased altogether. Happily we have seen no recurrence since then.

Thank you so much for helping us to get her back to normal without having to resort to drugs. I just wish more veterinarians were aware that there are alternatives.

The underlying cause for the seizures in this young female Collie was relatively easy to determine. We knew that the first thing we had to do was to detoxify from the vaccination. The usual homeopathics Thuja and Sulphur were used. In addition, Viratox and Detoxication Factors were used to assist the liver in handling the process.

Next we needed to supply the body with specific nutrients known to aid in the control of seizures. These were B6, Magnesium, DMG, Forskollin (herb), and the glandulars Neuroplex and Min Chex.

It's not always possible to determine the underlying cause of seizures but in most cases they can be managed through nutrition with minimal or no drugs. (see following article on seizures)

(6)

SEIZURES

Seizures in animals are a lot more common than most people realize. I don't think there is a month goes by that I don't receive a call from someone asking for help for a dog that is having seizures.

Seizures are a result of a disturbance in the electrical activity of the brain. They can manifest as a loss of consciousness, convulsions, abnormal movements, sensory changes, hallucinations, confusion, and a number of other symptoms.

The term "epilepsy" is derived from a Greek word that means "seizures". Epilepsy is not a disease in itself, but rather a symptom of a disorder. In the vast majority of cases (estimated at 70 to 80%) the underlying cause is unknown. If your vet tells you that the "etiology" is "idiopathic" it's just a fancy way of saying he doesn't know what is causing the seizure.

Despite the high percentage of specific diagnostic failure, there are a few things that are widely accepted as a cause for seizures. Heavy metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium and the light metal aluminum are known to induce seizures by disrupting neural function.

Severe hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) is a well recognized cause of seizures. Researchers have found that:

- ❖ Serum glucose levels are unusually low prior to seizure;
- ❖ Fifty to 90% of epileptics have constant or periodic low blood sugar;
- ❖ Seventy percent or more of epileptics have abnormal glucose tolerance tests.

Food allergy has also been shown to be an important factor in some cases of epilepsy. In one study, 63 children with epilepsy followed an elimination diet for four weeks and then added back one food at a time. Eighteen of the children with epilepsy did not exhibit allergy symptoms prior to the elimination diet and none of these showed any improvement. However, of the 45 children with epilepsy who also had symptoms suggestive of food allergy, 80% had fewer seizures while on the diet and 56% became seizure-free. Most of these children reacted to several foods, and in the group as a whole 31 different foods provoked seizures.

In double-blind food challenges, seizures recurred in eight of sixteen children after ingestion of the offending foods. In contrast, no seizures resulted from ingestion of a "placebo" food. This study indicates that food allergy is a major cause of seizures in half of epileptic children. I suspect that this probably holds true for our animal companions.

I am not aware of any specific studies relating to other allergens such as chemical, environmental, etc., but it is a small step in logic to suspect that anything that can disrupt the functioning of the electrical pathways of the brain can conceivably be an underlying cause of seizures. (7)

Now that we have the N.A.E.T. allergy elimination technique to use, I am confident that we will have a much greater chance of success in treatment of seizures that are directly caused by allergic reactions. By using hair analysis we can determine if the underlying cause is due to an allergen. With some astute detective work to uncover the likely substance we can treat the animal and remove the inappropriate allergic response.

Various diets and nutritional supplements have been used to treat epilepsy. Although the nutritional approach is not a cure-all, it can in some cases help control seizures or reduce the severity of drug side effects.

The most common basic nutrients used are: Vitamin B6, Vitamin E, Taurine, Magnesium, Manganese, Selenium and Zinc.

DMG (Dimethylglycine) has been shown to block induced seizures in rats and mice. In one human report it was found that there was a striking decrease in seizure frequency in a patient with long standing mental retardation when 90mg of DMG was administered daily. Despite treatment with Phenobarbital and Carbamazepine, the patient had an average of 16 to 18 generalized seizures each week. Within one week of starting DMG, seizure frequency dropped to three per week. Two attempts to withdraw the DMG caused dramatic increases in seizure frequency.

Forskollin (*Coleus forskolii*) is an important plant medicine in the Ayurvedic treatment of epilepsy. This herb has been found to increase 'adenylate cyclase' activity by as much as 530%, thus increasing electrical activity of the brain.

Neuroplex is a glandular specifically designed to support the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus is a versatile part of the brain that coordinates the endocrine system with the central nervous system. These two systems, the most powerful in the body, communicate their functions and status to each other through the hypothalamus gland.

Min-Chex contains calcium, magnesium, kelp, orchic extract and Niacinamide-B6. Clinical experience has shown it to be a useful product in some seizure cases.

If drug treatment has been instigated, certain precautions should be taken prior to the use of nutritional therapy. For example, there is evidence that taking large amounts of B6 can reduce blood levels of phenobarbital. Therefore, even though B6 has an anticonvulsant effect, it could conceivably aggravate seizures in some drug-treated epileptics. Because of the potential drug-nutrient interactions, these cases should be closely supervised by a health care professional.

I know if one of my dogs had seizure problems there are a number of holistic treatments that I would try first. Drug therapy would be at the bottom of my list if at all possible.

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MELATONIN

Melatonin is a hormone that is produced in the pineal glands of mammals and birds. It's a serotonin derivative and its secretion is linked to the daily light-dark cycle. It is known to regulate mammalian reproductive and circadian cycles.

You've probably read about its use in humans to treat sleep disorders, jet lag and numerous other disorders. Very little has been published concerning its use in veterinary medicine.

In our opening article (Puppy Prozac) we mentioned melatonin as a safe natural alternative for 'separation anxiety'. There are several other veterinary applications that you should be aware of.

Clinical experience has indicated that melatonin is very effective when used to control thunderstorm phobia (fear of loud noises). In a report by Linda Aronson, DVM, it was noted that about 80% of dogs suffering from this disorder will respond favorably to the use of melatonin. The response is unlike a depressant drug in that they do not appear groggy or disoriented. They are simply able to remain calm during thunder and windstorms.

Best results are obtained if melatonin is administered daily and at the first signs of a storm. It takes effect very fast and has no side effects. Usually the dog will not sleep, but remain fully aware of, although relatively unperturbed by, storms.

She also reports that melatonin has been found useful in treating some cases of 'canine recurrent flank alopecia' and 'acral lick dermatitis'. These are cases where animals will excessively lick an area causing baldness or skin irritations. Sometimes this can be attributed to 'nervous licking' that becomes a habit. Melatonin, through its calming action, can help to lessen or alleviate this abnormal behavior.

In addition, she has used melatonin in conjunction with other nutrients for dogs with epilepsy and autoimmune diseases. It appears not to have any adverse effect when used in conjunction with MAO inhibitors and steroidal drugs.

Although it is a relatively safe natural substance, please remember that melatonin is a hormone and thus I would not recommend using it with a pregnant or lactating bitch.



N.A.E.T. NOTES

During the last few months I have had the opportunity to extensively utilize the N.A.E.T. protocol in a fairly broad number of cases. I can truthfully say that I have never come across a more powerful tool that works so consistently well.

I have to admit that my own family has been the first beneficiary of the treatments. My Dad is now completely free of all allergies.

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Despite using every known natural remedy that I have ever heard of, my Mother has continued to suffer from 'hot flashes' for many years. Not anymore! In her particular case, the underlying cause for her lengthy ongoing problem was due to allergies. Once we got rid of these, the hot flashes disappeared!

For the first time in my own life I am looking forward to spring, confident that my own allergies are gone!

I also want to report that through the use of hair samples sent to me, we have been outstandingly successful in treating animals. The accuracy of this method has surprised me to some extent but I have found from experience that we can pick up even the most unusual allergy. Dr. Khalsa and Dr. Nambudripad were right. This can be done from hair samples and training the people to treat the animal at home.

The fact that the N.A.E.T. protocol can be applied successfully in this fashion removes a big stumbling block in having to find a local practitioner to obtain allergy relief. As there are so few veterinarians trained in the advanced technique taught by Dr. Nambudripad, I am excited about being able to help overcome this limitation.



NOTICE OF PUBLISHING CHANGE

Over the years of publishing the NR Newsletter I have tried to provide you with a base of information that you can draw from. From all the positive feedback we have received, I believe this has been accomplished.

As you all have become aware, the interest in the natural rearing of our animals has grown at a tremendous rate. So much so that the demands on my time have become overwhelming.

To maintain the quality of information in our newsletter I find that I must unfortunately cut back on the frequency of publications. Thus effective immediately we will be reducing the number of issues to 3 publications per year. The new schedule will be as follows:

- ❖ February/March (this issue)
- ❖ June/July
- ❖ October/November

All present subscriptions will be extended and you will receive the same number of issues that have been paid for. From time to time, if there is something unusual that comes to light, we may send out a "special Issue" to keep you informed.

I regret having to do this and ask for your understanding.

'Till next time, take care out there.